



BLUE RIDGE
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BLUE RIDGE SAILOR'S OF THE QUARTER SHINE

**CAPTAIN'S CUP KEEP BLUE RIDGE SAILOR'S
ACTIVE**

**NEW BLUE RIDGE CHIEF'S SERVE THEIR
COMMUNITY**

BLUE RIDGE MEDICAL HOSTS HEALTH FAIR

BLUE RIDGE SAILS THROUGH LOA





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BLUE RIDGE family and friends,

So many great things have happened onboard BLUE RIDGE since our last newsletter that I thought you might like to hear about our progress after finishing up our Dry Dock Restricted Availability (DSRA) and where we are headed in the weeks to come.

I would consider our efforts during DSRA as nothing less than successful! The teamwork displayed between BLUE RIDGE, Ship Repair Facility (SRF) and the various contractors who came onboard and provided us with great support and service was outstanding. We set our standards high coming into DSRA and met or exceeded every goal set. More impressively, we did this without any major safety issues or personnel casualties. The BLUE RIDGE and SRF team lived up to the

Japanese saying, "*Anzen Dai-ichi*" or Safety First.

As you will read in this edition of the newsletter, our crew has passed many significant milestones in recent weeks and our upcoming work schedule will provide the opportunity to complete more. In fact, during the production of this publication and after months of significant reconstruction, we underwent a few very significant steps in getting the ship closer to getting underway.

I am very happy to say BLUE RIDGE is undocked and back to her normal berth at Pier 7. This significant event and the numerous other accomplishments displayed by your Sailor the past few months bring me a great deal of pride and satisfaction.

As we put the dog days of summer behind us, our focus has shifted from the replacement and rehab of major systems to getting underway and being combat ready. A significant piece of the puzzle and an integral part of getting underway is the material safety and readiness of our engineering plant.

An important part of this readiness includes our crew's ability to respond to a major casualty in the main spaces. In fact, our ability to successfully combat a fire was recently evaluated by a team of inspectors during our Light Off Assessment (LOA). Our engineering team and members of the ship's various repair lockers diligently trained for the inspection, resulting in a "thumbs up" from the inspectors who deem Blue Ridge as ready to light off boilers and able to effectively combat a major fire if necessary.



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A testament to the can-do attitude of our crew, I'd be remiss if I didn't recognize them for a superb "juggling act" during our recent LOA. While we focused our attention on passing the inspection, every member of the team was able to change focus as we successfully orchestrated the Seventh Fleet Staff move aboard, which was a huge undertaking in itself. Blue Ridge Sailors answered the



call by turning over clean, habitable spaces and providing outstanding support, especially in the area of information technology. Simultaneously completing LOA and staff move aboard once again proves why our ship and crew is second to none!

As we continue our mission, I will keep you informed of our progress and ask that you do the same. Your support means a lot and keeps our Sailors motivated! On behalf of the BLUE RIDGE crew, I thank you for your unwavering support and interest in all that we do.

Warmest Regards,

Captain J. Stephen Maynard



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Family and Friends of BLUE RIDGE,

As our ship works through the month of October, most of you know we've had a very busy and productive summer in dry dock, wrapped up our shipyard availability and will go back out to sea very soon. As Sailors, getting underway is what we live for, and we're counting down the days until it happens.

Our Dry Dock Restricted Availability (DSRA) has been very challenging and your Sailor stepped up, fought the heat, humidity and unfamiliar workload like a champion to get the job done!

I want to take a moment to thank all of you for your continued support. Whether you are a husband or wife here in Japan, a mother, father, or friend back in the U.S., your unconditional support via e-mail, phone calls, and care packages is what keeps our Sailors motivated to do the best job they can do. The energy and enthusiasm these warriors exhibit in the execution of their duties is truly amazing and a large part of that is due to you.

As you'll read in this newsletter, DSRA has been an arduous undertaking. Our Sailors have still had time for fun and to honorably represent the BLUE RIDGE team in other venues.

Our ship proudly boasts a crew of outstanding athletes! In fact, our ship is proving to be a huge threat to all of the local shore-based commands in this year's Captain's Cup tournament. Currently, we're in 3rd place overall and our teams have dominated by taking 1st place in the following events: volleyball, softball and soccer. We've also had teams place in the top three for other events and some individual standout performances in tennis and swimming.

I also want to recognize Culinary Specialist First Class (SW) Khoi Pham who was named Blue Ridge Sailor of the Quarter for second quarter 2004. Leaving the familiarity of his duties in the CPO Mess galley, he stepped up this summer and led a rehabilitation team during DSRA. Joining him as our Junior Sailor of the Quarter and winner of the Commander Amphibious Group One JSOQ competition is Hospital Corpsman Third Class (SW) Ralph Vincent P. Solon. Both of these Sailors epitomize the Navy's Core Values of Honor, Courage and Commitment and we are all very proud of their accomplishment.



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Last but certainly not least, 11 BLUE RIDGE First Class Petty Officers recently transitioned from the “blue shirt” ranks into the Chief Petty Officer community. This promotion is accompanied by more responsibility and higher expectations. The entire CPO Mess worked very hard to give these new Chief Petty Officers the confidence to perform at their new level. The transition was accomplished through group physical training, core competency training, local community service work, and numerous team-building skills events.

Congratulations to our newest Chief’s for earning their anchors. I am sure they will continue to earn the right to wear them every day!

FCC Phillip Bauer

PNC Gerald Figueroa

MAC William Holloway

GMC David Kaye

ETC Mark Kramer

MMC James Patterson

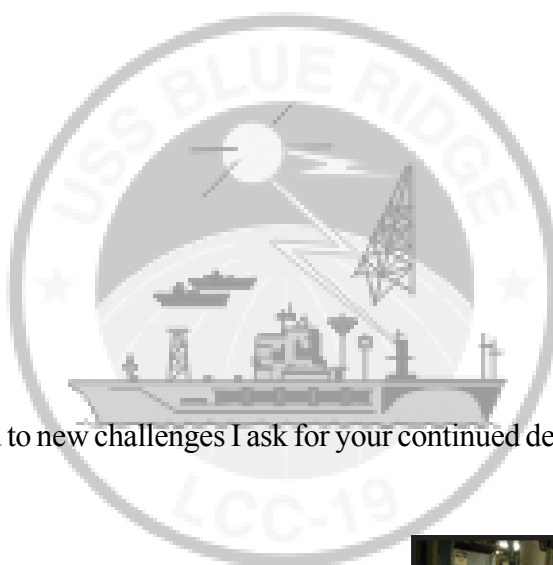
CSC Sherwin Penaranda

SKC Christopher Simmons

ITC Eric Stowe

MMC Garrettson Taylor

BMC Russell Townsend



As we look forward to new challenges I ask for your continued dedication and support.

Sincerely,

Anthony Knight

Command Master Chief

USS Blue Ridge (LCC-19)





BLUE RIDGE NEWS

Blue Ridge Sailor of the Quarter



Culinary Specialist First Class (SW) Khoi Pham from Oakland, Calif. was named Blue Ridge Sailor of the Quarter for third quarter 2004.

Pham says he feels proud that the Blue Ridge leadership believes that he one of the best sailors aboard Blue Ridge.

“I really thank my chain of command for supporting and acknowledging me and my junior sailors for working so hard,” said Pham.

Culinary Specialist Master Chief Steven Francisco said CS1(SW) Pham’s community involvement sets him a part from the other First Class Petty Officers in the Supply Department.

“He is very active in the local community. He volunteered for the Special Olympics in Yokota and he also helped feed homeless people in Yokohama,” said Francisco.

Francisco states that Pham was hand picked to be the leading petty officer for the Blue Ridge Rehab division during the Blue Ridge dry dock selective service availability.

“He leads approximately 80 sailors that are TAD to the rehab division, and he leads one of the largest divisions aboard the ship right now,” said Francisco.

Pham feels truly honored to be the best sailor aboard Blue Ridge.

“I am proud to be nominated and to win Blue Ridge Sailor of the Quarter,” said Pham.



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Blue Ridge Junior Sailor of the Quarter



Hospital Corpsman Third Class (SW) Ralph Vincent P. Solon, a San Diego native was named Blue Ridge Junior Sailor of the Quarter and Commander Amphibious Group One for the second quarter 2004.

Solon is a valuable asset to his department by taking on a variety of tasks along with his regular duties. He is the departmental PFA coordinator, Safety Petty Officer, and he also handles all of the daily sick calls aboard Blue Ridge.

Blue Ridge Medical Department Leading Chief Petty Officer, Hospital Corpsman Senior Chief (SW/AW) Patrick L. Thrift says Solon's leadership abilities are beyond that of a typical third class petty officer.

"He has the determination and vision to reach the next level of his naval career. I think that he is a perfect role model for a young third class petty officer; he sets the example, and he always seeks opportunities to better himself," said Thrift.

Solon enjoys the challenges being a corpsman because of the many opportunities he has to positively affect others lives aboard Blue Ridge.

"I really like to help people, and I have always wanted to save lives. When I see a patient and a few days later the patient is feeling better because I helped him that gives me great satisfaction," said Solon.



BLUE RIDGE NEWS

Sailors Take Fun, Competition to Next Level With “Captain’s Cup”

By JO2 Hodges Pone III

It was the summer of 2004. Athletes from around the globe were training and waiting to showcase their strength, agility and prowess in a variety of sporting events, all on a quest for gold and to proudly represent their country.

Although they weren’t competing in this summer’s Olympic games in Athens, Greece, Sailors aboard USS Blue Ridge (LCC 19) gave their all in the “Captain’s Cup” sports competitions and the prize was bragging rights and Blue Ridge pride.

“There’s something here for everyone,” said Blue Ridge Morale Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Funds Coordinator, Chief Electrician’s Mate (SW) Angel Guerrero. “Teams have squared off in everything from softball to golf. We even threw in a few non-traditional events like bowling and chess to reach every demographic of our crew.”

For the past few months, Blue Ridge Sailors have run, jumped, and even swung their way to glory. Many Blue Ridge Sailor-athletes have also participated in the Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) competition, where Blue Ridge is poised to claim this year’s overall title as base champions.

Guerrero said participating departments have challenged each other, had fun, and even

talked a little trash while working toward Captain’s Cup bragging rights. “These sporting events are providing friendly competition at an inter-departmental level,” said Guerrero, a Staten Island, New York, native. “The Captain’s Cup is widely supported, the crew is enjoying it and it promotes team spirit within each department.”





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One of the events in which Sailors pitted themselves against each other was a grueling relay race. Several teams battled the oppressive heat, humidity and each other as they made rounds around the track in a four-person relay race. As each runner suffered through nearly 1000 meters of burning lungs and rubber legs, the lead in this race changed hands many times, offering quite a show and drama to those watching the competition. On the bell lap, Storekeeper 2nd Class (SW) Jorge

Gonzalez held a firm grip on the baton and the Supply team's lead as they ran past the competition to the finish line.

"As the 'Anchor Leg,' or last runner, of the relay, I had to maintain our lead," said the San Antonio native. "I had to make sure no one passed me and I was determined not to let them."

Another Sailor who faced adversity, but on a base-wide scale, was Yeoman 3rd Class, Loribelle Valdez. The San Jose, Calif., native had her back against the wall from the beginning of the CFAY Captain's Cup Tennis Tournament.

"I had dislocated my shoulder and lost my first match in the tournament," she said. "Every match afterwards, was possibly the eliminating match."

Despite her injuries, she went on to win four straight matches and served her opponent a defeat on her way to becoming champion. Valdez believes beating all of the odds made her victory an accomplishment to relish.

"Being injured, possibly losing and representing the Blue Ridge put me under a lot of pressure," she said, "but all of these factors made the victory more sweet."

On August 13, the Olympic Games returned to the country of their birth and the city of their revival. However, you didn't have to turn on your television to catch intense competition and extraordinary athletic achievements. Stopping by a CFAY sporting venue just about guaranteed sports fans a chance to witness Blue Ridge Sailors dominate Captain's Cup events and displaying the discipline, sportsmanship, and athleticism of true Sailor-athlete champions.



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Blue Ridge Sails Through Light Off Assessment

By Journalist Seaman Marc Rockwell-Pate

YOKOSUKA, Japan— USS Blue Ridge (LCC-19) recently cleared the first of several hurdles that determine when the Seventh Fleet flagship is ready and able to do what it does best; serve the Navy and our country on the high seas. On the heels of nearly six arduous months and 30 million dollars worth of repairs in Dry-Dock Selected Restricted Availability (DSRA), the Blue Ridge crew came together and aggressively attacked and successfully completed an intense Light Off Assessment (LOA).

“This ship was extremely well prepared and organized for this assessment,” said Capt. Bill Haflich, Director of Engineering Training for Afloat Training Group (ATG) Pacific. “The engineering spaces were bright and orderly, and it remains the cleanest steam plant in the Pacific.”

Ships that are in the industrial confines of dry-dock for more than 90 days are required to undergo an LOA. This engineering inspection determines whether or not a ship can safely “Light Off” its boilers. The assessment consists of three important areas; material condition assessment, main space firefighting capabilities and programming/administration inspection.

“All three of these parts of the assessment are vital to the ship's seaworthiness,” said Lt. Cmdr. Charles Brock, an ATG Pacific materials inspector. “If the engine room is dirty, then you’re not going to be running efficiently. If your paperwork (programming/administration) isn’t intact, then that is probably evidence that the plant is not running properly, and every ship has to be able to fight a main space fire.”

On day one of the three day assessment, the inspectors did the material and programming/administration assessments of the engine room. The inspectors looked for any damage to machinery, checked pressure gauges and reviewed training records and fuel oil quality logs for correct entries and periodicity. Normally this portion on an LOA inspection takes a day and a half. According to Brock, Blue Ridge’s good teamwork and preparation helped accelerate the process.

“The inspection is ahead of schedule due to good organization and engineering knowledge,” said the Milwaukee, Wis., native. “Everyone from the Engineering Officer to the fireman in the main space is doing their job right.”

On the second day of the assessment, the crew performed a mock main space fire scenario. At approximately 1 p.m. the one bravo boiler experienced a major fuel leak of 30 gallons of fuel. Inspectors were stationed throughout the ship, observing and grading the crew’s performance as the scenario played out.



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To an outsider looking in, watching a ship's crew react to a main space fire might resemble orchestrated chaos. However, weeks of preparation and drill scenarios helped ensure the inspection drill was a success, proving that training turns potential into performance.

"It was really no big surprise that the drill went well," said Damage Controlman Second Class (Surface Warfare) Ivoe Nicholson, who serves as the On Scene Leader for Repair Locker 5. "Everyone in our locker was very prepared. Repair 5 is mostly Engineers who are very experienced and used to high speed environments."



"The whole crew really played a pivotal role through the fire drill to help the ship achieve this significant accomplishment," said Capt. J. Stephen Maynard, Blue Ridge Commanding Officer. "Everybody really preformed well and was lead by an outstanding Engineering Department."

Day three of the assessment consisted of an early morning meeting between ATG Pacific inspectors and Blue Ridge Staff to discuss the assessment of the ship. Before the ship was given a "green light" for lighting off, discrepancies that the inspectors found had to be corrected.

"There is always going to be something wrong on the ship in these assessments," said Brock. "We're just here to find the discrepancies the ship does have so that the crew can fix them."

Immediately following his out brief with the inspection team and learning that Blue Ridge was once again certified to light off boilers, Capt. Maynard immediately expressed his pleasure and pride as he congratulated his Sailors over the ship's announcing system. After addressing the crew, Maynard made his way down to the Engineering Plant and watched the first boiler being lit, completing of the first chapter in Blue Ridge's book of life after DSRA.

"The process of getting this ship back into operational status is difficult, but my crew has handled the first step with great professional skill," said Maynard. "It's unbelievable to think that the main engine was being put together only a few weeks ago."

"Blue Ridge is a national treasure," Capt. Haflich said. "I think that she just gets better with age."



BLUE RIDGE NEWS

Prospective Chiefs Clean Up PAWS



It's the time of the year that the worldwide Chief Petty Officer (CPO) community looks forward to – training newly selected CPOs as they transition from the “blue shirt” ranks and take their place beside fellow Chiefs in the CPO Mess.

Seventeen First Class Petty Officers from Commander SEVENTH Fleet, USS BLUE RIDGE (LCC-19), and USS CORONADO (AGF-11) joined forces as a combined Prospective Chief Petty Officer's (PCPO) Mess, receiving training and mentorship from their Chiefs as they transform into the CPOs of tomorrow.

PCPO training includes fitness, CPO indoctrination, CPO core competencies and community service.

Putting their community relations training to use, the group recently spent a day sweating and getting dirty at Yokosuka's Pets Are Worth Saving (PAWS) facility, an on base non-profit organization that shelters homeless pets awaiting adoption.

“It has always been important to me to give back,” said ITC (Sel) Brandon Barnard of CORONADO. “It shows that we are concerned and care about our communities,” he added.

The Chief selectees performed a handful of tasks in their committed effort to improve the overall appearance of PAWS.

“We were turning to,” said GMC (Sel) David Kaye of BLUE RIDGE's Combat Systems Department. “We cut the grass, raked the yard, removed rocks and debris and stripped and waxed their floors,” he said. “It wasn't really hard work, but we definitely worked up a sweat,” Kaye finished.

“This is a HUGE project,” smiled Jenny Cox, President of PAWS. “Our volunteer base is great, but it is hard for us to do jobs like this,” she added.

“What took these guys an afternoon to complete, would've taken us a couple of weeks,” she finished.



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“I enjoyed seeing our efforts turn PAWS into a more comfortable and pleasant atmosphere for both pets and people,” said BLUE RIDGE ETC (sel) Mark Kramer. “The landscaping, cleaning and waxing made a 100 percent increase in pride and satisfaction for us and the staff at PAWS,” he finished.

Another group equally satisfied with the day’s effort, was the handful of CPOs who worked beside the selectees offering assistance and encouragement.

I was very impressed with the CPO Mess support,” said BMC (Sel) Russell Townsend of BLUE RIDGE. “We worked shoulder-to-shoulder all day, building relationships that will continue years after the CPO transition is over,” he said.

As the PCPOs worked on constructing friendships and trust with their future messmates, they also realized why community service is a key ingredient in the recipe for CPO success.

“I realize it’s the efforts of volunteers that make organizations like this great,” said GMC (sel) Eric O’Neal of CORONADO. “More people should take the time to get out in their communities and lend a helping hand,” he added. “Volunteering is a rewarding job for both the volunteer and the person in need.”

Congratulation’s to all the new Chief’s aboard Blue Ridge





BLUE RIDGE NEWS

Blue Ridge Medical Department Hosts Health Fair

YOKOSUKA, Japan — USS Blue Ridge (LCC 19) crewmembers took a much needed break Aug. 26 from the rigors of their dry-docking selective restricted availability to attend the Third Annual Blue Ridge Health Fair, along with the crew of USS Safeguard (ARS 50).

Blue Ridge and Safeguard Sailors spent the day learning about the importance of leading a healthy life style. The fair served as a great venue to gather various health-related resources in one place.

The Blue Ridge medical department hosted the health fair and it offered both expert advice and presentations from many on-base organizations, such as the Fleet and Family Support Center and U.S. Naval Hospital Yokosuka. The booths covered health care topics from physical fitness to alcohol awareness.

According to Blue Ridge medical officer, Cmdr. Christopher Quarles, the health fair was organized to help inform the Blue Ridge crew.

“This is a fun and festive way to bring in resources from all over the base that we do not have on the ship” said Quarles. “Basically, it will help us better educate the crew, and also give them the resources they need to adopt a healthier life style.

“The response to participate in this years health fair has been outstanding. We have health and fitness experts from all over the base, and even a few of our Blue Ridge staff are participating in this year’s health fair,” said Quarles.





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Chief Damage Controlman Willie Yarbrough from the Naval Hospital's Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Program (SARP) said it is a great opportunity to come out and talk to Blue Ridge Sailors about the problems associated with alcohol and substance abuse.

"I think it was a very great turn out, and I had lots of good questions. Most of the participants were very open to our informal survey, and they were attentive and listened to what we are all about at SARP," said Yarbrough.

Boatswains Mate 3rd Class Arvin Ilcabrera said he leaned how to improve his cardiovascular exercises. "I got some good ideas about doing cardiovascular exercises a little better, and I also learned a lot about the dangers of drinking and smoking," said Ilcabrera.

Sailors left the health fair with loads of brochures and a little more knowledge about making better decisions that will help maintain future mission readiness and personal health.



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Engineering Department

We finally hit the home stretch and crossed the finish line of our DSRA period, BLUE RIDGE engineers remained focused and continued to do what it takes to ensure our ship is ready and able to safely get underway. Teamwork is our credo. Material safety and readiness is our charter.

On paper, our accomplishments read as a 'laundry list' of tasks finished. However, the scope of Engineering's accomplishments is impressive.

After formally inspecting our boilers, our hard working teams charged hard to recognize and repair any discrepancies found along the way. We also successfully wrapped up the preservation of the Engine Room and Fire Room bilges.

We've altered the ship's configuration by installing a ship's service diesel generator as well as 2 emergency diesel generators, including all related cables and support systems. A few of our other major jobs included working on aft steering bearings, reinstalling the ship's rudder, working closely with the SRF on our High Pressure and Low Pressure turbines, and cleaning out the evaporator. Our new Air Conditioning Units are on-line and cooling down the ship.

As we keep the press on to make BLUE RIDGE ready to steam, we also set our sights on the accompanying Light Off Assessment, or LOA which was a huge success. Our expertise was demonstrated when we showed inspectors the Blue Ridge team is ready and able to effectively respond to an emergency onboard, particularly a major fire in our main engineering spaces.

Engineering department meticulously inventoried the ship's Damage Control equipment to ensure we are 100% Damage Control ready. In another effort to ensure readiness, training for respective repair lockers was intense and often, both on the ship and in the classroom and lab environments of Afloat Training Group. We held fire drills, sent people through fire fighting and team





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training courses. On top of training the ship's crew and repair lockers, Engineers held separate training three times a week to ensure absolute success for the LOA inspection.

Even after all of the long hours and arduous work, the men and women who make up the BLUE RIDGE Engineering crew would like to take a moment to recognize and congratulate two of our own for their recent promotion to Chief Petty Officer. Good job MMC (SW) Taylor and MMC (SW) Patterson! We look forward to your continued dedication and leadership within the department and the ship.

Communications Department

Welcome Aboard

ITSN Mabini
ITSR DeShields
ITSR Flores
IT2 Ramos
IT2 Patti
ITSA Crawford
ITSN Fisher
IT2 Sarber
IT2 Scott
IT2 Teel
IT2 Williams
ITSA Gurule
ITSA Abalos
ITSR Montgomery

Farewell

YN1 Estelle
IT1 Stuckley
IT2 Wilson
IT2 Stephenson
IT1 Smith
ITC Alexander
IT1 Lansaw
IT2 Benson
IT3 Drayton





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Communications Department Continued,

The last several months have been busy. In April, we executed the plan to move Seventh Fleet Staff aboard the USS Coronado (AGF-11) and USS Blue Ridge (LCC-19) personnel aboard the Barge APL-40. Communications Department Sailor's worked hard to establish the Communication Networks so that we could accomplish our daily mission and operations from our temporary working/living quarters. On April 12, our beloved ship went into a Dry Dock Ships Restricted Availability (DSRA) and that was the beginning of a new exciting experience.

The start of the dry dock marked a new beginning for the Communications Department. The Sailors focused on different missions as well as their daily duties. The mission's include critical training, schools, and the renovation of their spaces. The schools help prepare our department for the new transition from Windows NT to Windows 2000 and newly installed equipment.

A Department re-organization occurred to enable a robust infrastructure that supports mission requirements and builds on the experience of our personnel. The merging of Joint Information Processing Center (JIPC) and the Local Area Network (LAN) will improve workflow within the Communications Department. The new name of our two newly combined work-centers is the NETWORK OPERATIONS CENTER (NOC). During this time of change we were busy working long, exhausting hours, renovating our spaces and accomplishing our daily missions. Our Sailor's still found time to reach individual pinnacles of professional success. A number of Sailor's were able to achieve their Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist (ESWS) qualification prior to commencing DSRA. The mighty conquerors of professional success over the last several months are: IT3 Beltran, IT3 Crew, IT3 Nguyen, and IT3 Thompson.

The individual ESWS accomplishments are 'par for the course' for the Sailor's of the Communications Department, also we would like to recognize two exceptionally motivated Sailor's: ITC Eric D. Stowe, who was selected for advancement to Chief Petty Officer. IT3 Chanh T. Nguyen was selected as the C7F Sailor of the Quarter for the Second Quarter 2004. Congratulations on your achievement!!!

We would like to welcome some new members to our family. Congratulations to the following new parents on their newborn baby boys: ITC Grove and wife Rebecca, son: Kyle. IT2 Wood and wife Maki, son: Ashton.

The Communications Department was also busy meeting deadlines for renovating spaces and accomplishing daily tasks. Yet we still managed to schedule fun activities for the Department. We enjoyed a Departmental Picnic, supported and/or participated in Captains Cup events, which we emerged victorious in events such as Bowling, Ping-Pong and Billiards. We hosted the following re-enlistments between April and August: IT2 Davis, IT2 Brown, IT2 Theis, and IT2 Poffenbarger for a combined SRB total of \$115,500.00.



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The upcoming fall months hold a myriad of challenges and changes. We completed the rebuilding of our berthing and work areas, system installation and upgrades, repopulation of over 2000 shipboard computers, operational testing of all equipment, and exited the DSRA period. We're more than prepared to meet all new challenges, particularly with the support of our friends and family!

Combat Systems

As BLUE RIDGE wrapped up the challenging DSRA, all of the hard work and dedication of the crew and SRF was evident. After several months of intense work, the ship came back to life. Although the electrifying spirit of BLUE RIDGE remains the same, the ship underwent many changes and had a lot of equipment and systems revamped, replaced or removed. In addition to changes to systems and equipment within the Combat Systems Department, many key positions of leadership have also changed. Some personnel transfers brought in new faces, while others have allowed familiar members of the team to move up to new positions of greater responsibility.

As we bid fair winds and following seas to LTJG Sullivan in June, CWO2 Wagner checked onboard as EMO and has eagerly jumped into the mix as CSE's Division Officer. We also recently welcomed LTJG Williamson to the Combat Systems team. No stranger to Japan, she reported to BLUE RIDGE from USS CUSHING, only a few piers away. She has enthusiastically assumed the duties and responsibilities of Weapons Officer from LTJG Reisinger, so he can focus on his award winning Force Protection team as the ship's Anti-Terrorism Officer.

Our Combat Systems Departmental Leading Chief Petty Officer (LCPO), ETCM Roush, transferred in August to the Pacific Northwest for shore duty in the beautiful state of Washington. ETCS Lisco left CSE division to become the next Combat Systems Departmental Leading Chief Petty Officer replacing ETCM Roush. Master Chief Roush's calming wisdom, ability to make things happen, and genuine concern for our Sailor's will be sorely missed. We wish him and his family the best of luck. As ETCS Lisco moved up, so did ETCS Galito who assumed the responsibilities of CSE Division LCPO. We also received ICC Fox onboard in June, which has allowed ETC Coon to return to CSE Division as the Maintenance Chief after enjoying a very successful tour as the IC division's "designated IC Chief."

One of the main focus areas of DSRA was to improve the living area for our Sailors. Each division in Combat Systems supported a habitability team that worked on improvements in our berthing. Each division





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also focused on painting and preserving workspaces through out the ship. SRF performed numerous major upgrades and Combat Systems tracked their progress and ensured that the work performed was top quality. In addition to tracking SRF, we also worked very hard on our own projects. We made great progress to improve the conditions of all our spaces.

With DSRA complete we shifted our focus to lighting off equipment, moving back into our spaces and restoring C4I capabilities for the staff and crew. Having habitable, comfortable and clean living conditions are paramount. It was a hot summer, and we welcomed the re-start of the air conditioning on the ship. We have been very busy. We recently restarted and tested all of our equipment. This not only includes the newly installed systems, but every other system that has been turned off since April. Each system had to be tested in preparation for the C7F Staff's move aboard.

CSF Division received and installed two recently refurbished CIWS mounts. They also worked with SRF to perform systems checks and maintenance to ensure that both mounts are ready for Sea Trials and all upcoming shoots. In addition to the new mounts, CSF Sailors repainted all weapons magazines onboard. This was quite an undertaking considering the size and number of magazines.

CSI Division also kept very busy. They headed up a team of Sailors that removed 200 legacy speakers from the ship's entertainment system. They also spent a lot of time inspecting the tanks on the ship ensuring that the level indicators work.

The Master-at-Arms were busy refurbishing their spaces as well. They aggressively worked on constructing a Duty Master-at-Arms customer service area and a new finger printing service area. They also worked closely with the Force Protection cadre. The installation of a new high-security spotlight system and the installation of the "Smart Brow" for access control are just a couple of the items they have accomplished.

CBS "Sayonara": Fair Winds and Following Seas to the following shipmates: LTj.g. Sullivan, ETCM Roush, FCC Humphrey, ET2 Cherry, ET2 Vanek, FC1 Shragis, GM1 Garner, MA2 Alcorn, and QM2 Dollar.

CBS "Welcome Aboard": LTj.g. Williamson, CWO2 Wagner, ICC Fox, IC1 Fernandez, IC3 Howard, ET2 Bailey, FC1 White, GM3 Vinson, GM2 Allbritten, FC3 Schannot and FCC(sel) Bauer.

CBS "Award Spotlight": LOC – ET2 McCoy, ET2 Reed and FC3 Secamiglio.

Good Conduct – ET2 Nielson, ET3 L. Chu and ET2 Reed.

CBS "Advancement": FC1 Corle, GM3 Philips, GM3 Wainz, GM3 Vinson, IC3 Cogswell, IC3 Madden and Captain's Advancement Program (CAP) recipient IC2 Penson.



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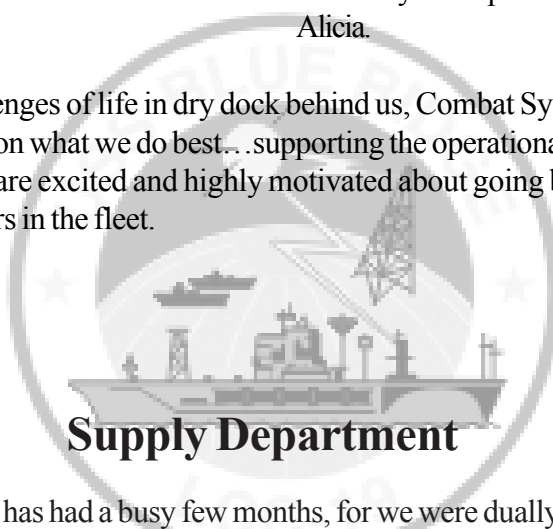


CBS “New Chiefs on the Block”:

Congratulations to the following individuals for their recent selection and transition into the Chief Petty Officer community: ETC (SW/AW) Kramer, GMC(SW/AW) Kaye, FCC (SW) Bauer, and MAC(SW) Holloway.

CBS “Family Affairs”: Congratulations to LTj.g. Reisinger and his new bride Megan, who said their “I do’s” April 24th. GM3 Wainz and his new wife Carol tied the knot July 17th. ET3 Eary is the proud father of baby girl Alicia.

As we put the challenges of life in dry dock behind us, Combat Systems has turned the corner and is shifting focus on what we do best...supporting the operational requirements of COMSEVENTHFLT. We are excited and highly motivated about going back to sea and being the best Combat Systems Sailors in the fleet.



Supply Department

Supply Department has had a busy few months, for we were dually challenged during the availability period — we continued to provide full services on the berthing bargeduring the DSRA period as well as make tremendous progress in the improvement and rehabilitation of our work and living spaces onboard the ship. It was a difficult task for the entire department, and required many hours of planning and overtime work to get our many spaces into our coveted “showroom” standards.

Just to touch the surface on the scope of what was achieved during the DSRA period, three divisional offices were completely renovated through contractor work (GSK, Sales, Disbursing) and two other offices (Billeting, Supply Dept) were upgraded as part of intense ship’s force work. Both departmental berthings — the 38-man and 75-man berthings had major rehab work, such as painting and deck resealing. Major SRF work and ship’s force work occurred in several of our storerooms, including S-1’s “H” and “P” supply parts storerooms, S-2’s consumable storeroom, S-3’s bulk goods, consumable and soda storerooms, and S-5’s DC/consumable storeroom. Also numerous fanrooms, staterooms, heads, and other associated spaces had improvement work conducted. Our self help rehab teams spent endless hours of needle gunning to bare metal, priming and repainting to have the spaces ready—a difficult task by anyone’s standard.



BLUE RIDGE

NEWS

With DSRA in our rearview mirror, we look forward to a challenging period ahead of us where we become operational and thus move back into a more familiar routine...READY FOR SEA!!

As the fiscal year came to a close, S-1 division was extremely busy fulfilling the ship's logistical requirements, closing out financial records, ensuring all obligations have corresponding expenditures, and inventorying all 7,500 plus line items of parts onboard. Much to the crew's delight, S-2 reopened the Edward F. Ney award-winning Crew's Galley and Chief's Mess. Sales/Services and Disbursing also worked hard toward restarting operations in beautiful, completely renovated offices, with fresh ideas on how to better support its Blue Ridge customers. The S-5 Wardroom/Billeting operation had the unique challenge of moving Staff and Blue Ridge Officers back onboard the ship, beginning its famous hotel-like services, and reopening its redecorated Wardroom.

On the horizon for the Department is the LTT assessment, a kind of warm-up for a Supply Management Assessment in the coming year, as well as the 18-month Postal Assessment, which will take place in November.

Supply Department continues with its philosophy of customer service excellence through respect, honesty, and teamwork. As the ship becomes operational, we look forward with pride and anticipation of the challenging, yet extremely rewarding days ahead.

Congratulations to the following individuals who were promoted!

LTJG Herrera (also earned SWSCO pin !!)

SKC(SW) Simmons

CS1(SW) Pham

SK1(SW/AW) Cabunoc

SK2(SW) Rasavong

MR2(SW) Treagear

SH3(SW) Frias

CS3 Espinoza

CS3 Buhs

CS3 Walker

CS3 Tallbott





BLUE RIDGE

NEWS

Supply Department welcomes aboard the following individuals:

LT Christopher Poulos
ENS Decker
DKC(SW/AW) Hector Leyco
CS1 Agustin
CS3 Tasia Mikan
SK3 Villahermosa
SKSN Lee
SKSN Gatbonton
CSSA Jennifer Ulloa
SKSR Jones

We bid a fond farewell to our shipmates:

DKC(SW/AW) David
SKC(SW) Ramiro Mangahas
PCC(SW) Tejada
DK1(SW) Medina
DK2(SW) Wu
SK2(SW) Gue
CS2(SW) Cavanaugh
CS2(SW) Clarke
CS2(SW) Isidro



S-1

AWARDS - NAM - Navy and Marines Corps Achievement Medal

SKC (SW) Cesario D. Bautista Jr

GAINS - SK3 Villahermosa, SKSN Lee, SKSN Gatbonton and SKSR Jones

LOSSES - SKC (SW) Ramiro Mangahas, PCC (SW) Tejada and SK2 (SW) Gue

Advancement: SKC (SW) Simmons, SK1 (SW/AW) Cabunoc, SK2 (SW) Rasavong and MR2 (SW) Treagear

S-2

The Food Service Division congratulates the following personnel for advancing to the next paygrade: CS1 (SW) Pham, CS3 Tallbott, CS3 Marshall, and CS3 Nelson.



BLUE RIDGE

NEWS

- We bid farewell to LT Singleton, and we welcomed the following personnel to the food service team: CWO2 Neil Villanueva as the incoming FSO, CS1 Agustin from NAS Pt Mugu, CS3 Tasia Mikan and CSSA Jennifer Ulloa, both reporting from CS "A" school.

- Congratulations also to CS1 (SW) Khoi Pham for being selected as the Blue Ridge Senior Sailor of the Quarter, and to CSSN (SW) Jason Mortis as the Supply Junior Sailor of the Quarter.

S-3

- \$32,000.00 was turned over to MWR.
- SH3(SW) Frias was frocked to 3rd Class Petty Officer.
- SHCM(SW/AW) Alamillo, SH1(SW) Mandal and SH2 Murphy completed the ROM II school earning the NEC 3131.
- SH3 Arnston completed Barber school earning the NEC 3122.
- SH1(SW) Amberger and SH3 Robles completed Force Protection SSEW and ASC school.
- SHSA Lasley and SHSA Everett reported on board.
- Ensign Herrera promoted to LTJG.
- Spaces that were renovated: Bulk Storeroom, Soda Storeroom, Self Service Storeroom, Self Service laundry and Sales office. Dry Cleaning machines were taken out.

S-4

S4 Division underwent a facelift, both in the office space on board USS Blue Ridge and in personnel. The division is excited about recently moving into a newly renovated office. The "faces" of the division changed as well. We bid a fond farewell to recently departed shipmates DKC(SW/AW) David, DK1(SW) Medina and DK2(SW) Wu. Their unparalleled service and dedication to our mission will be sorely missed. On a happier note, we extend a hearty "welcome aboard" to DKC(SW/AW) Hector Leyco who reported in to us from PSD Seoul, Korea on 9 June. Congratulations to LTJG Herrera on his recent promotion and to DK3(SW) Wu for attaining her ESWS pin.

S-5

Advancement:

CS3 Espinoza

CS3 Buhs

CS3 Walker

SOQ/JSOQ:

CS2 Baxter - S5 1st QT

CS3 Camungay - Supply Dept 1st QT

CS3 Rangel - S5 2nd QT





BLUE RIDGE

NEWS

Deck Department

During DSRA, Deck was extremely busy and did an excellent job of overhauling aged spaces. The long hours put in by the department and the work accomplished during the availability period will ensure the ship is in good stead for its upcoming fall deployment.

Deck Department Berthing was overhauled and improved to create a more comfortable living environment for our hard working Sailors. Racks, lockers, and bulkheads were sanded, primed, and painted, also the deck was sanded down and resealed. Elsewhere, the forecastle, aft mooring, and all 8 mooring stations were rehabilitated and are now in 'like-new' condition. The flight deck received major improvements, including all new non-skid and new corrosion-resistant nets, and the HCO control tower got replacement windows. The Back Porch was extended by SRF, which will provide increased storage space and work room for the helicopter detachment when embarked.

Deck Department acquired two new RHIBs (Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats) to replace the PL and Captain's Gig on the starboard side. Final preparations of the new davit system associated with these new acquisitions were recently completed. Our sailors have already been exposed to RHIB operations, and will now have a high-speed, reliable, and highly maneuverable asset for small boat operations.

The department also worked hard to prepare for two aviation inspections and a SAR (Search & Rescue) inspection. Throughout the DSRA period, Deck kept up its training program through lectures and running the boats. This necessary training served as a refresher for the experienced Boatswains Mates, and it ensured that newly reported personnel were exposed to departmental evolutions as well. In addition, BM2 Cantey, BM2(SW) Hester, BM3 Bamfield, BM3(SW) Brewer, SN Allen, SN Chamberlain, SN Gutierrez, and SN Potter went to school to get qualified as RHIB and small boat coxswains.

Deck Department was thrilled to learn in late July that BM1(SW) Townsend was selected for Chief. BMC Townsend worked hard in the SRF shack as the departmental DSRA representative, keeping the department on pace to accomplish all jobs before the final closeout of the availability.

This Drydock period brought many changes and fresh challenges to the Deck Department. These challenges have been met enthusiastically, and departmental spaces are in the best condition they have been in for years. Deck Department was happy to close out the availability period and anxiously awaits our opportunity to shine on our upcoming operational deployment.



BLUE RIDGE

NEWS

OI Division



Greetings from OI division! Since last newsletter, BLUE RIDGE entered a major overhaul period called DSRA. OI division's main focus at that time was ship preservation. This allowed OI Division personnel the necessary time to correct, replace, and repair any items or deficiencies in their respected spaces. But who says all work and no play? The command introduced weekly intramural sports to offset the arduous working conditions. These events offered friendly competition between each department for bragging rights in which Operations Department is in the running for first place overall. This competition also served as a moral booster for the command as well.

While the ship was undergoing major changes, OI division experienced the same with the departure of key personnel within the division in pursuit of furthering their careers in the military. We bid farewell to LTJG Trisler (Divo), OS2 Stevens, OS3 Green, OS3 Rodriguez, OS3 Lyle, and OSSN Ziller. Also bid a farewell to OSSN Fairchild who served his country and decided to pursue a career outside the Navy. Their service to OI contributed greatly to the successful completion of many operations during underway periods with zero mishaps. But their departure brings new beginnings with the arrival of OI's newest family members. LT Moore, our new AOPS/CIC Officer, is joining us from Marine Corps Forces Pacific at Camp Smith, Hawaii. ENS Myers, a Naval Academy Graduate, is our new Division Officer. We have also added a group of hard charging Operations Specialist: OS3 Davis, OSSN Holder, OSSN Isbell, and OSSN Barksdell are all coming from OS "A" School. OSSN Holder and OSSN Isbell both finished in the top 10 percent of their class qualifying them for the accelerated advancement program. OS3 Ware also joins us from PSD Yokosuka, Japan. With all of our additions, OI's future looks bright.

As we prepare the ship from dry dock to blue water operations, we shifted focus to training for the upcoming operational cycle. This allows us to be better prepared for all ships evolutions. In closing, we in OI would like to say that it has always been a pleasure to share with you our status as a division. We look forward to the future!



BLUE RIDGE

NEWS

Medical/Dental Department

BLUE RIDGE was awarded its 7th consecutive Green H. The Green H is awarded to ships that have demonstrated a progressive health promotions program to help Sailors make informed healthy lifestyle choices.

Medical actively prepared to move back onboard after the dry dock period wrapped up. Over the past 4 months, we have taken an extra steps to improve our emergency readiness. Despite our busy schedule this summer, 75% of our Hospital Corpsman have completed the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) course.

We also experienced a large turnover of staff this year. We have said fair winds and following seas to: LCDR Bivins, HMCS (SW) Jantzen, HMC (SW) O'Mara, HM2 (SW) Rodriquez, DN Patten. We have welcomed LCDR Christopher Lee as the new Dental Officer, HMCS (SW) Patrick Thrift, HN Clayton Smith, and HN Cheryl Stahl.



Administration Department

The past several months, Admin Department was very busy finishing up their spaces on the ship for the recent move aboard. We are excited to finally have our spaces back and continue our service to our fellow Blue Ridge shipmates. The administration department would like to welcome the following individuals aboard: JOC Raney, LI1 Hannah and family, PH2 Clayton and husband, LISN Newcomer, LISA Suring, PHAA Harding, YNSA McMannis, YNSR Thomas, YNSA Russ, YNSA Booker. We would also like to farewell the following individuals XO Lt.Cmdr. Spurlock, PNCM Moslina LI2 Weaver, YN3 Davila and LI3 Bailey. We wish them the best of luck on their following tours.

We would like to congratulate our new Admin chief PNC Figueroa. He was selected for advancement to Chief Petty Officer. He is married to Ona Dela Cruz and has two beautiful daughters. Gianella is the oldest of the two. Gillian Reese is a brand new addition to the family. We would like to congratulate the Figueroa's on her September 24th arrival.

We would also like to congratulate JOC Raney on his marriage to Ai Ishikawa. We wish them the best of luck in their new lives together.